

Fortunately, progress is being made in determining the cause of scleroderma and in developing more effective treatments for the disease. Researchers have developed an animal model that will help them to understand more about the nature and the progression of scleroderma. They have also made an important finding in the discovery of abnormalities in collagen-producing cells, known as fibroblasts, among scleroderma victims. Furthermore, they have found that treatment with specific agents, such as d-penicillamine, may retard the hardening of collagen in the skin.

As is the case with any other disease, it is very important to diagnose scleroderma in its early stages. Timely intervention, coupled with sound treatment, can improve the quality of life enjoyed by people with scleroderma until research yields a cure.

To enhance public awareness of scleroderma, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 219, has designated the week beginning June 9, 1991, as "National Scleroderma Awareness Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning June 9, 1991, as National Scleroderma Awareness Week. I encourage the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate programs and activities that will enhance their understanding of scleroderma and the need for continued research.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6304 of June 11, 1991

Independence Day, 1991

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

On July 4, 1776, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, our Nation's Founders boldly declared America's Independence and affirmed the truth "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." They did so knowing that they risked nothing less than their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. On this occasion, we celebrate that profound act of faith and courage and give thanks for the rich legacy of freedom that this country has enjoyed ever since.

That legacy has enabled us to enjoy unparalleled levels of security and prosperity, and it has inspired millions of people around the world in their own struggles for liberty and self-government. Thus, every picnic and parade, every backyard barbecue and public display of fireworks

that makes the Fourth of July a favorite summer holiday carries deeper symbolism and meaning. Each resonates with the singular joy of a free people.

This year we are particularly grateful for the blessings of liberty because we have been reminded of the price that many brave and selfless individuals have been willing to pay to secure them. Just months ago, when forces led by a brutal tyrant invaded a small, defenseless country—raping, pillaging, and threatening not only the stability of an entire region but also vital interests of all freedom-loving peoples—thousands of courageous Americans answered the call of duty. Our celebration of Independence Day, 1991, is dedicated in a special way to them—to the regulars, reservists, National Guardsmen, and members of the United States Merchant Marine who helped to liberate Kuwait.

Of course, as we honor our Persian Gulf veterans, we also remember in prayer each of their comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. We salute with great pride and gratitude the military personnel who offered vital support for our mission from bases here at home and around the world, and we pay due tribute to all those who have served in the United States Armed Forces.

The Americans who fought tyranny and lawlessness in the Persian Gulf have upheld, once again, the principles that were first affirmed on these shores 215 years ago when our Nation's Founders elected "between submission or the sword." On this Independence Day—a day marked by triumphant homecomings and by the promise of a safer, more peaceful world—it is fitting that we recall the words that Thomas Jefferson wrote shortly before his death on July 4, 1826:

All eyes are opened, or opening, to the rights of man . . . These are grounds of hope for others. For ourselves, let the annual return of this day forever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby ask all Americans to join in celebrating this 215th anniversary of our Nation's Independence with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fiftieth.

GEORGE BUSH